

## Your Farm Service Agency Online Monthly Newsletter Covering the Latest Topics

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### Hawaii Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP): *Thoughts from a Producer*

Hal Glatzer is a participant in Hawaii's CREP program. CREP provides financial incentives to producers and encourages restoration of degraded agricultural land through reforestation and the establishment of sound conservation practices.



Hal Glatzer and Kathy Frankovic at their CREP site

Farm Service Agency staff recently visited with Mr. Glatzer and asked him why CREP interested him.

Hal replied, "We have quite a lot of land here, more than we need to live on. It's a combination of fields, forest, and conservation zoned land which encouraged us to think about giving something back to this island that we love. We already have many slender koa trees, none older than perhaps forty, a large expanse of uluhe, and a few hapu'u, all of which are native. We also have exotic invasive species – impenetrable masses of flowering ginger, thickets of waiwi, and fields of Wainaku grass. And pigs! Then we saw an article about CREP in the Tribune-Herald," Hal continued. "We realized that we probably had an ideal site across a small stream, where the koa and uluhe were most abundant."

In responding to the question of what advantages of CREP he would share with others, Glatzer said, "We are city folk, born and raised, but we have always had a love of the land. Because we didn't grow up as kama'aina, we appreciate having guidance on sound forest management. We obtained an experienced fencing contractor, were provided guidance on best conservation practices, and received recommendations on approved products such as what specific herbicides to use. But compared to doing this work all by ourselves, we must admit that there is a great advantage in CREP reimbursing us for half of our expenditures!"



Hal and Kathy removed waiwi and wild ginger from their CREP site, then planted native koa and ohia seedlings, naupaka, and maile shrubs among older koa trees.

Glatzer finished by saying, "Kathy and I are greatly impressed by the level of professionalism in the personnel with whom we are working and the ongoing assistance that they provide."

CREP enrollment is occurring now on all islands. If you are interested in Hawaii CREP and want to find out if your land is eligible for aid to install conservation measures, the removal of invasive species, and receive financial incentives in the process, contact your local Farm Service Agency Office.

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**Hours**

Monday—Friday  
8:00 am—4:00 pm

**Website**

[www.fsa.usda.gov/hi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/hi)

## CRP General and Hawaii CREP Continuous Sign-Up



There will be a four-week Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general signup which will begin on March 12, 2012 and end on April 6, 2012.

CRP is a voluntary program available to agricultural producers to help them use environmentally sensitive land for conservation benefits. Producers enrolled in CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving covers to improve the quality of water, control soil erosion and develop wildlife habitat. In return, participants receive rental payments and cost-share assistance.

Hawaii producers are encouraged to look into the Hawaii Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). A federal and state partnership, Hawaii CREP is a continuous, non-competitive, CRP signup. Contract duration is 14 to 15 years with cost share and incentive payments as part of the Hawaii CREP program.

If you are interested in becoming part of the CRP or Hawaii CREP program or just wish to obtain additional information, please contact your local FSA office or go online at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## Collecting Race, Ethnicity and Gender Data

Departmental Regulations established policy for collecting race, ethnicity, and gender data for conducting oversight and evaluation of civil rights compliance in programs offered by USDA. Form AD-2106 will be provided to each program participant to collect this data. Even though providing the data is voluntary, Farm Service Agency (FSA) encourages participants to complete the form so that FSA can keep our records current.

## FSA Participates at the Big Island Association of Nurserymen (BIAN) Plant Sale

Hawaii County Farm Service Agency staff took part in the Big Island Association of Nurserymen Plant Sale in Hilo on Friday, March 3 and Saturday, March 4, 2012.



Big Island Day Lily Company's Rachel Leyva, BIAN member, poses with her edible daylilies. She provided some daylily education to customers that can be found in her book *Growing Daylilies: A Picture Guide*.

The event gave FSA an opportunity to inform potential commercial farmers and vendors of available programs, such as CREP, RTCP and direct operational and farm ownership loans.

Big Island Association of Nurserymen (BIAN) was founded in 1968 "to promote the nursery industry on the Big Island of Hawaii and to bring together like minded people." The organization has 70 members and counting.



BIAN member, Quindembo Bamboo Nursery's Peter Berg, with his remaining bamboo plants after the big rush on Friday night when over 500 plant lovers came through the event doors.



## Honoring Veterans - Edward Avegalio, American Samoa

Pava Farms dba Avegalio Farm Pavaiai, is located in Pavaiai, American Samoa. They are breaking ground in the field of hydroponics in the territory and are in their third year of growing lettuce and tomatoes using a drip vertical stack method. At the helm of this thriving operation is Edward Avegalio, who succeeded his father Vailuu Failautusi Avegalio Sr, retired US Navy, in the family owned and operated enterprise.



American Samoa's Hydroponics Innovator Edward Avegalio

Following in the footsteps of his father and two of his six siblings Edward enlisted in the United States Army in 1988, and is no stranger to hard work and perseverance. He retired after sustaining combat injuries in Operation Desert Shield. In 2001, after working through rehabilitation, Avegalio redesigned his family farm in Pavaiai with help from the American Samoa Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and Veterans Affairs Vocational Rehabilitation office. Pava Farms was transformed into an accessible haven where Edward could participate in the daily operation and management of the family farming business. Avegalio Farm Pavaiai is a diversified operation known throughout the island for their Tahitian Papayas and limes. Thanks to a recent farm loan from Farm Service Agency, Pava Farms is now one of the islands first commercial hydroponic systems producing romaine lettuce, cilantro, basil, parsley and chives. While most of their lettuce is sold to the school lunch program, local restaurants and stores, the family still maintains a small road side stand in honor of the humble beginnings as a small family operation.

Avegalio, proud husband to Fiatele Porotesano Avegalio and father of three daughters shares "I am a strong advocate of food security. I believe in investing in Agricultural practices that work, and I believe that as members

of the global community we can all make small efforts to invest in ourselves by growing small gardens to help increase awareness and build back some of our self sufficiency. It's time for us all to 'farm boy up' and get dirty experimenting with what kinds of crops we can each contribute for personal use. If we each foster this attitude, just imagine."



Hydroponic vertical stack drip method at Avegalio Farm Pavaiai

## County Committee Advisors

The Kauai Farm Service Agency County Office Committee (COC) has just named Gary Ueunten as COC Advisor. As the COC Advisor, Gary will be a voice for under-represented groups and minority farmers and ranchers in the community. County committee members and their county executive directors, reach out to producer groups who are under-represented on county committees to find the right person to serve as Advisor. Mr. Ueunten will join the Kauai COC at their March meeting.



Advisors serve for a 12 month period not to exceed nine consecutive years. They attend each COC meeting, including executive sessions. One of their primary responsibilities is to increase awareness of and participation in FSA activities, including elections. They help develop interest and incentives for minority group members to consider FSA work as a career. Advisors also solicit candidates from minority groups for nomination during the election process.

## USDA Celebrates 150th Anniversary



The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) celebrates 150 years on May 15 and throughout 2012. An excerpt from U.S. Agriculture Secretary Vilsack's speech at the 2012 Agricultural Outlook Forum is below.

"In 2012, USDA will commemorate and celebrate the 150th anniversary of our founding in 1862, when President Abraham Lincoln signed into law an act of Congress establishing the United States Department of Agriculture.

Two and one-half years later, in what would be his final annual message to the Congress, Lincoln called USDA 'The People's Department.' At that time, about half of all Americans lived on farms, compared with about 2 percent today. But through our work on food, agriculture, economic development, science, natural resource conservation and a host of issues, USDA still fulfills Lincoln's vision - touching the lives of every American, every day.

As we commemorate 150 years of accomplishments, USDA is learning from past experiences and looking to the future. In the years to come, we must help address the changing needs of agriculture and rural America. We must continue to help provide a safe, ample food supply for our nation and the world. To meet those goals, we are working to make USDA a more modern and effective service provider and to deliver the best possible results for all of the American people.

Over the course of the year, I hope that Americans will acknowledge and join in our commemoration of 150 years of USDA. It is a great time to learn about our contributions to the strength and health of this nation, and to see how we can continue to partner with Americans working to provide a better life for their families."

### FSA Financial Services Website Available to Producers

The Financial Services website is available for producers to conveniently view financial information and conduct FSA business. The website located at [www.fsa.usda.gov/fmi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/fmi) is accessible to producers who have an eAuthentication Level 2 account.

Producers who do not currently have an account may register for an eAuthentication Level 2 account at [www.eauth.egov.usda.gov](http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov).

The Financial Services website allows producers to view summary and detailed information about specific payments, collections, outstanding debt (excluding loans) and CCC-1099-G statements. This information can be helpful for record keeping and income tax preparation.

If you have any questions about accessing the Financial Services website or obtaining an eAuthentication Level 2 account, contact your local FSA county office.

#### Dates to Remember

March 12, 2012	CRP General Signup Begins - enrollment through April 6, 2012 (Hawaii CREP signup continues as it is a continuous signup.)
March 29, 2012	2012 Agriculture Awareness Day Exhibit, Hawaii State Capitol, Honolulu County Office
March 31, 2012	NAP Deadline for Acreage and Production records
April 19, 2012	County Office Committee Meeting Hawaii County
April 20, 2012	Earthday Exhibit, Hawaii Community College, Hawaii County
May 28, 2012	Memorial Day - FSA offices closed
June 1, 2012	Deadline to file for SURE 2010
Ongoing	Hawaii CREP (Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program) Signup

### Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE)

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that incurred in the crop year 2010.

Sign-up for 2010 SURE losses continue through **June 1, 2012**. SURE is available to eligible producers on:

Farms in counties with Secretarial disaster declarations, including contiguous counties, that have incurred crop production or quality losses, or both, and includes all crops grown by a producer nationwide, except grazed crops.

#### OR

Any farm in which, for the crop year, the actual production on the farm because of disaster-related conditions is 50 percent or less than normal production of the farm.



**Remember to Retain Your Receipts for 2012 Reimbursement Transportation Cost Program:** For more information on the RTCP program visit your local county office or [www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport).

## IMPORTANT - AGI Reconciliation Process

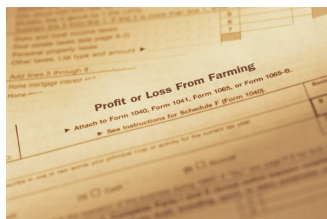
### FSA's *Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Reconciliation*

*Process* begins when FSA is notified that the IRS has not received a valid "*Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information*" form. There are two distinct reasons why a producer appears on an FSA AGI Reconciliation Report:

- 1) IRS did not receive a consent form from the producer or
- 2) IRS rejected the consent form.

In these cases the IRS notifies the FSA National Office which then directs the producer's recording FSA County office to reconcile the report. The county office then contacts the producer to complete a CCC-931 "*Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) and Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information*".

It is then the FSA County Office responsibility to mail the completed CCC-931 consent form to IRS. Failure to provide the required "*Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information*" forms may render a producer ineligible for FSA program benefits and require repayment of benefits received.



Interest Rates for March 2012	
Farm Operating - Direct	1.375%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.375%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency	3.75%
Limited Resource	5.000%

## Loans to Beginning, Minority & Female Farmers

Farm Service Agency assists beginning farmers, certain ethnic & racial minorities, and females to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- ◆ Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- ◆ Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- ◆ Agrees to participate in a farm assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- ◆ Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's median size.

Additional program information, loan applications and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

## Loans: Land Contract Guarantee Program

The new FSA Land Contract Guarantee Program assists beginning farmers by offering guaranteed payments to landowners willing to sell and finance a land purchase to a beginning, minority, or female farmer. The seller may select either a prompt pay guarantee (up to 3 years of payments), or a 10-year, 90% guarantee on the unpaid principal owed by the buyer. This program can be used in the purchase of land for the lesser of the purchase price or \$500,000. Contact your local FSA office

### **GovDelivery - News, Updates, More**

The Hawaii and Pacific Basin Farm Service Agency (FSA) has moved to an instant delivery, electronic option which provides notices, newsletters and reminders electronically via email. Like many other organizations, FSA is working smarter and more efficiently to conserve resources and taxpayer dollars.

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